TAKE HEART

A Conversation in Poetry

Edited & Introduced by Wesley McNair, Maine Poet Laureate

Kate Barnes, a resident of Appleton, is a former poet laureate of our state. Just behind the anecdote of her poem is a story with implications for mothers and daughters everywhere.

Peaches

By Kate Barnes

Jenny, because you are twenty-three

(and my daughter),

you think you know everything; and because I am fifty-three

(and your mother),

I think I know everything.

A week ago you picked up two green little peaches, only half-grown and still hard,

from under the loaded peach tree

and put them on the kitchen window sill;

and I thought

(though I didn't say a word):

they're too small, they will just rot

but I won't move them, Jenny put them there.

Now the summer is over and you are gone, the mornings are cool, squashes conquer the garden, the tree swallows have flown away, crickets sing—and the sweet juice of your peaches runs down my chin.

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